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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001559

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/23/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [CG](#) [UG](#)

SUBJECT: LRA UPDATE: MONUC/FARDC MISSION LIKELY THIS WEEKEND

REF: A. (A) KINSHASA 1532

[1](#)B. (B) KINSHASA 1519

Classified By: PolCouns MSanderson, reasons 1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) Sixth regional military commander General Padiri continued September 22 to insist to LRA that the GDRC is prepared to assist with and accept only unconditional surrender. He told MONUC that he is negotiating, as of yesterday, directly with Kony (in Sudan) via satphone, as well as with Colonel Otti in Aba. FARDC noted only 288 armed elements in sight yesterday, with about 18 civilians, and expressed concern that LRA may be starting to disperse, particularly as they already are now in two sites, a "headquarters" about 11 kms north of Aba and a "civilian base camp" about 4 kms from the village. Padiri is not yet in Aba.

[1](#)2. (C) Now that it has successfully prepositioned fuel in Aru, MONUC will send 2-3 aircraft over the weekend (Saturday, Sunday or Monday) to Aba, weather permitting. The mission will be accompanied by an MI-25 for protection and deterrence. General Padiri, representatives from UNHCR and MONUC's DRRR (repatriation of foreign combatants) unit will comprise the mission. MONUC Force Commander is going September 23 to Kampala to speak personally with Ugandan army chief of staff, following up on a diplomatic note dated September 20 from the Ugandan COS which MONUC received September 22. The gist of the note is as follows:

"Uganda has the honor to refer to the current security situation as regards the presence in Congolese territory of the terrorist group Lord's Resistance Army, 50 of whose members crossed into Congolese territory unimpeded from Sudan on September 13, after attacking helpless civilians in Loka and Yei in Uganda. On September 19, following the successful initial entry, another 50 terrorists also entered into the DRC, and all are now in the Garamba Park. The presence there of these terrorist elements unacceptably heightens the already existing threat to Ugandan national security posed by the presence in Congolese territory of the ADF..."

The Ugandans requested urgent consultations with MONUC at any convenient location, hence the visit today to Kampala. If the Force Commander is back in time he might join the mission to Aba as well.

[1](#)3. (C) MONUC is also trying to confirm reports of 2-3 Ugandan brigades (roughly 10,000 men) on the Ugandan side of the Uganda-Congo border. MONUC chief of staff noted that, if indeed these troops are there, it would be somewhat odd since it would have been difficult for Uganda to have transported them there in just the two days since the reported LRA entry into the DRC.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: If Congolese suspicions that the LRA are spreading out are true, it is worrisome on several counts. A flashpoint certain to ignite Ugandan military response would be any sort of cross-border attack at the moment, whether by the LRA or ADF. It is not impossible that some LRA elements might have been dispatched to seek out ADF sites (which are not far from the Aba/Aru area). MONUC is aware of this risk and, once actually present in Aba, will try to contain the LRA in their present locations while talks continue.

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